

THE OMEN



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THIS IS THE
LAST ONE
OF THE YEAR

YOU
ARE LOVED
BY THE
OMEN

FOR
IT MAY
BE YOUR
VERY LAST

ENJOY IT
WHILE
YE MAY

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POLICY

The Omen is a biweekly publication that is the world's only example of the consistent application of a straightforward policy: **we publish all signed submissions from members of the Hampshire community that are not libelous.** Send us your impassioned yet poorly-thought-out rants, self-insertion fan-fiction, MS Paint comics, and whiny emo poetry: we'll publish it all, and we're happy to do it. **The Omen is about giving you a voice, no matter how little you deserve it.** Since its founding in December of 1992 by Stephanie Cole, the Omen has hardly ever missed an issue, making it Hampshire's longest-running publication.

Your Omen submission (you're submitting right now, right?) might not be edited, and we can't promise any spellchecking either, so any horrendous mistakes are your fault, not ours. We do promise not to insert comical spelling mistakes in submissions to make you look foolish. **Your submission must include your real name: an open forum comes with a responsibility to take ownership of your views.** (Note: Views expressed in the Omen do not necessarily reflect the views of the Omen editor, the Omen staff, or anyone, anywhere, living or dead.)

The Omen staff consists of whoever shows up for Omen layout, which usually takes place on alternate Thursday nights in the basement of Merrill on a computer with an honestly pretty adequate monitor, nowadays. You should come. We don't bite. **You can find the Omen on other Thursdays in the Dining Commons, the post office, or on the door of your mod** (if we get to putting it on doors, anyway).

EDITORIAL

TO SUBMIT

Submissions are due always, constantly, so submit forever. You can submit in rich text or plain text format by CD, Flash Drive, singing telegram, carrier pigeon, paper airplane, Fed-Ex, Pony Express, or email. Get your submissions to omen@hampshire.edu or Rachel Ithen, Box 1413.

Dear readers,

This editorial marks the very last editorial of the Spring 2012 semester, the 2011 – 2012 academic school year, and my third full year at Hampshire College. It's a little bizarre to think that I know so many people who are currently in the process of finalizing their Div III projects, preparing to ring that damn bell, and graduating in just a few short weeks. It's hard to believe that I, myself, will be in that same spot 365 days from now. Once you graduate, you're a COLLEGE GRADUATE.

Dude. Whoa.

I remember the first time I showed up to an Omen layout, we all went to a computer lab in the library and sat down to do our own work. I was a bit intimidated, and when I came back to layout the next semester it had already become the Omen I know and love today... sitting in the Omen office in the Merrill A Basement, just chatting and joking around and someone getting layout done at the same time. Some people may not be into a publication without as much structure as one that says "person a, your responsibility is section b, and person c, you have to do section d, and this all needs to be done by 4:07 pm and we'll go from there." But it truly is a chill place to just hang out, and besides – all you need to do to consider yourself "part" of the Omen is to show up, maybe submit something... but we're not even that picky.

If every person involved with the Omen actually did permanently leave after they graduated, the current iteration of our group would be comprised of roughly five people. But thankfully, we can still expect some Div IIIs and Div Frees to show up every now and then. But for how much longer can we rely on them?

We need you, dear readers. I've been really quite happy with

the number of submissions we've been getting from people I personally have never spoken to before, because, to be quite honest, we're never really sure if anyone knows to submit. In fact, we're thoroughly convinced that no one reads the Omen. But someone obviously does. And if we ever post something controversial our readers usually triple in size, at least!

(That being said, I vow never to intentionally construct something controversial to publish in order to gain readership. <3)

What we need now is for some of you folks (and I know you're out there) to show up at layout. I'm saying this now because you have several months to let this idea simmer in your mind before you have to make any commitment. And the beauty is, even in the fall, the biggest commitment you will ever have to make for us is, "I will attempt to think of my own staff box answer before I have to leave layout, or I will trust that the Omen gods will think up a good one for me."

That's not even really a commitment. What are you saying, Rachel. You don't make sense.

Seriously though, we could use some more friends, especially next year when Ben & I (two of the three signers) will probably have to step down at one point or another. We're a lovely group of people, really.

So think about it, take it into consideration, and come back in the fall with a willingness to at least come hang out with us once or twice. We don't bite.

<3

Have a fantastic summer, everyone. Div IIIs – good luck, I love you, etc. Current students returning – come back and say hi sometime.

Your not-creative-at-all, wishes-I-could-be-funny signer and editor,

Rachel



THE OMEN HAIKU
*views in the Omen
do not necessarily
reflect the staff's views*

PEAK

Div III Introduction

Geoff Ivison

Layout Monkey's Note: Geoff requested that we make the font really small to "save trees." Filthy hippie.

For my division III project, I have worked in Michael Knapp's lab at UMass Amherst investigating a biochemical mechanism regulating the hypoxia response in animals—the interaction between hypoxia inducible factor 1a (HIF-1a) and factor inhibiting HIF-1 (FIH-1). Hypoxia inducible factor is a transcription factor whose transcriptional activity is activated in hypoxic conditions, as implied by its name. Many biochemical and cell signaling mechanisms contribute to the regulation of this activity, but the mechanism my research focused on is the regulation of HIF-1a by FIH-1. FIH is an Fe(II)/αKG dependent dioxygenase, which, under normoxic conditions, uses dissolved O₂ as a substrate to hydroxylate Asn 803 of HIF-1a. Once hydroxylated, HIF is unable to bind to the cotranscriptional activator p300, blocking its transcriptional activity. Under hypoxic conditions, FIH is unable to hydroxylate HIF, and it gains transcriptional activity, turning on the expression of many genes implicated in the cellular and physiological responses to hypoxia. My research investigated how a particular residue of FIH (Q239) influenced the positioning of N803 of HIF-1a, by measuring changes in the catalytic activity of FIH after various point mutations at this residue.

Oxygen metabolism and reactive oxygen species

O₂ is a molecule with enormous metabolic significance. As the terminal electron acceptor in the mitochondrial electron transport chain, O₂ is instrumental in the production of most of the ATP in eukaryotic organisms. However, this same process is also responsible for one of the most destructive biological effects of oxygen—the formation of reactive oxygen species. Although the electron transport chain (ETC) is designed to deliver electrons from reduced species such as NADH to oxygen in a controlled manner, it is still possible for electrons to "leak" out of the intended pathway as they are passed down the chain. One route by which they commonly escape is onto O₂, forming to H₂O₂ by various superoxide dismutases, and can subsequently be broken down into H₂O and O₂ by glutathione peroxidases or catalase. However, if free metal ions are present in the cell, H₂O₂ may be converted by the Fenton reaction to the highly reactive hydroxyl radical, •OH. The hydroxyl radical can participate in numerous deleterious reactions in the cell. These reactions

include lipid peroxidation (which produces toxic and mutagenic compounds), DNA base modification, protein oxidation, and the creation of advanced glycation end products by the reaction of proteins with carbohydrates (which deactivates the proteins involved). It is strongly in the interest of the cell to regulate the production of reactive oxygen species.

The cell has numerous tools for doing this. The cell can regulate the cytosolic concentration of metal ions by altering the expression of metal ion transporters in the plasma membrane, or by sequestering metal ions in proteins such as ferritin, preventing them from catalyzing the Fenton reaction (Valkeo 2007). If H₂O₂ bypasses glutathione peroxidases and catalase, the cell can detoxify lipid peroxides using antioxidants such as tocopherol (vitamin E), ascorbate (vitamin C), carotenoids, and flavonoids. Glutathione peroxidases can also detoxify lipid peroxides. The cell can also regulate its exposure to oxygen. Under hyperoxic conditions, more oxygen is available to react with electrons in the ETC, and production of ROS is observed to increase (Turrens 2003). It is therefore beneficial to prevent oxygen concentration from increasing too much. ROS formation also increases under hypoxic conditions, possibly because the ETC becomes saturated with electrons without enough O₂ to act as the terminal electron acceptor (Valkeo 2007, Vignini 2011, Semenza 2009). This provides further impetus for the cell to prevent oxygen concentration from falling too low.

Hypoxia inducible factor, mechanism and regulation
HIF-1 is one of the primary ways that mammals regulate oxygen concentrations, and a key player in orchestrating the cellular response to hypoxic conditions. In its active form, HIF-1 is a heterodimeric transcription factor that is composed of an α and β subunit. The β subunit is constitutively expressed, and is primarily localized in the cytoplasm in its monomeric form (Hirota 2005, Kaelin 2008, Semenza 2009). The α subunit is also constitutively synthesized, but under normoxic conditions it is hydroxylated at Pro 402 and 564 by prolyl hydroxylase domain (PHD) proteins, and at Asn 803 by factor inhibiting HIF (FIH). Hydroxylation at Pro 402 and 564 creates a binding site for the von Hippel-Lindau (VHL) tumor suppressor protein, which is a component of a ubiquitin ligase. Subsequent polyubiquitylation of HIF-1a targets it for destruction by the proteasome. Hydroxylation at Asn 803 blocks interaction with the cotranscriptional activator p300 because it interferes with the binding site on HIF-1a called the c-terminal transactivation domain (CTAD). Therefore, under normoxic conditions, the dimer is unable to function as a transcription factor. Under hypoxic conditions, the enzymatic activities of FIH and PHD proteins are inhibited by substrate deprivation, and hydroxylation does not occur. This allows the HIF-1 dimer to form and translocate to the nucleus, where it activates the expression of genes involved in the hypoxia response.

HIF activity is also regulated at the translational level. Extracellular signal transduction through the PI3K/Akt/mTOR pathway is a used by many growth factors and other hormones to stimulate cell proliferation (Semenza 2009). This pathway works by inducing activity of p70 S6 kinase, and inhibiting eIF-4E binding protein. p70 S6 kinase phosphorylates ribosomal subunit S6, and inhibition of eIF-4E binding protein releases eIF-4E (eukaryotic translation initiation factor 4E), both of which increase translation of a subset of cellular mRNAs that includes HIF-1a. Since activity of HIF-1a is still heavily regulated by oxygen concentration, this pathway may function to prime the cell to respond to hypoxia that may occur as a result of cell proliferation.

The role of HIF-1 in the hypoxia response
The active HIF-1 dimer is a broad acting transcription factor that is instrumental to the cellular and physiological response to hypoxia. In 2009, Mole et al. published the results of a chromatin immunoprecipitation experiment combined with a microarray analysis, which revealed binding sites for HIF-1a associated with 394 different gene loci. HIF-1 has been implicated in the regulation of genes involved in iron metabolism, erythropoiesis, tissue vascularization, glycolytic

metabolism, and the electron transport chain.

HIF-1 has a central role in regulating erythropoiesis. Red blood cells carry 99% of the oxygen in blood, so regulation of their production is an important pathway by which oxygen delivery to the tissues is controlled (Maxwell 2003). HIF-1 regulates the expression of various genes that influence the production of red blood cells, including genes involved in the intestinal uptake of iron and the recycling of iron in the tissues (hepcidin), the transport of iron to bone marrow cells for use in hemoglobin synthesis (ceruloplasmin, transferrin, transferrin receptor), and the hormonal signal that regulates the production of red blood cells (erythropoietin receptor) (Semenza 2009).

HIF-1 regulates angiogenesis during embryonic development, wound healing, and various disease processes. [Still working on this section!]
HIF-1 has an important role in regulating genes involved in glycolytic metabolism and the ETC. At the cellular level, the most important role of the response to hypoxia is preventing ATP production from dropping to unacceptably low levels and the regulation of the production of reactive oxygen species. HIF-1 orchestrates this process by upregulating genes involved in glycolysis and altering the expression of mitochondrial genes. HIF-1 has been shown to activate the transcription of glucose transporters, which increases the availability of fuel for glycolysis (Semenza 2009). HIF-1 has also been shown to increase the expression of various glycolytic enzymes, as well as the enzyme responsible for the production of lactate from pyruvate, lactate dehydrogenase A. These changes in expression help the cell to compensate for the loss of ATP production due to the incapacitation of the mitochondrial electron transport chain. In the mitochondria, HIF directs a switch in expression between two subunits of cytochrome c oxidase (COX), the final enzyme in the ETC. HIF directs a switch from COX4-1 to COX4-2, which has more optimal properties for catalyzing the transfer of electrons to O₂ under hypoxic conditions, by upregulating the expression of both COX4-2 and ION, a protease that is required for degradation of COX4-1. HIF-1 also activates the expression of pyruvate dehydrogenase kinase-1 (PDK1), which in turn inactivates pyruvate dehydrogenase, the enzyme responsible for synthesizing acetyl-coenzyme A from pyruvate. This shunts substrate away from the citric acid cycle, and subsequently reduces the amount of the electron donors NADH and QH₂ available for the ETC. HIF-1 can also trigger mitochondrial autophagy by increasing expression of BNIP3.

HIF-1 in disease
Since HIF-1 has a central role in many normal biological processes, it is natural that dysfunction or dysregulation of the activity of HIF-1 can lead to physiological consequences in disease states.

HIF-1 has been shown to mediate pulmonary hypertension resulting from chronic lung disease (Semenza 2009). Arterioles in systemic circulation dilate in response to hypoxia to increase delivery of oxygen to the tissues, while arterioles in pulmonary circulation constrict to shunt blood away from lung tissue that is not being oxygenated. While this is an adaptive response for short periods of hypoxia, or when only part of the lung is hypoxic as in pneumonia, it is maladaptive in disease states where lung hypoxia is widespread, as in chronic lung disease. HIF-1 mediates this response by triggering pulmonary artery smooth muscle cell contraction via modulation of voltage gated ion channels, and, over longer periods, smooth muscle hypertrophy, which further constricts these blood vessels. Normal functioning of the HIF system contributes to pathology in chronic lung disease of prematurity (Asikainen 2006). The neonatal lung develops in hypoxia, which is essential for the normal signaling of angiogenic pathways. In preterm neonates, lung capillaries are exposed to normoxic conditions before they are able to complete their development, which prevents lung capillary development from completing normally. This leads to significant impairment of lung function, often leading to death. If the infant survives the neonatal period, they will live with impaired lung function for the rest of their life. Inhibition of HIF hydroxylases could potentially mimic the hypoxic lung conditions experienced in utero, and allow completion of lung capillary development. Asikainen et al. obtained promising results from a cell culture study with a PHD inhibitor, which suggested that lung development might be rescued by treatment with this compound. They tested this compound in vivo with a baboon model of premature birth. Although this compound had no significant effect on mortality, compound treated animals did show notably improved lung development, suggesting promise for this strategy for treating chronic lung disease of prematurity.

HIF-1 has been associated with negative clinical outcomes in cancer, including tumor aggression, metastasis, and poor prognosis (Poon 2009). Hypoxic tumors are also usually resistant to radiotherapy and chemotherapy treatments. HIF-1 mediates these effects by its control over angiogenesis and the metabolic adaptation to hypoxia, as well as induction of pathways involved in cell survival

and metastasis. It has been shown that blocking HIF-1 activity or expression in tumors slows tumor growth in xenograft models, and renders hypoxic cells more vulnerable to attack by conventional cancer therapies. Interestingly, HIF-1 overexpression is not associated with decreased patient survival rates in all types and stages of cancer. This may be due to HIF activating genes involved in apoptosis during extreme hypoxia. HIF-1 activity can become dysregulated in cancer by any number of mechanisms. Loss-of-function mutations in VHL prevent polyubiquitylation of HIF-1a following hydroxylation by PHD. Succinate inhibits HIF hydroxylases, and so mutations in succinate dehydrogenase that allow succinate to build up in the cell also cause inhibition of hydroxylation of HIF-1a (Kaelin 2008). Many tumors have mutations that constitutively activate the PI3K/Akt/mTOR pathway, which increases the rate of synthesis of HIF-1a (Poon 2009). These factors all speak to the difficulty of targeting HIF-1 for cancer treatment, and the necessity of further research in this area.

HIF-1 has shown promise as a neuroprotective protein in treatment of stroke. The brain is especially sensitive to damage from hypoxia and reactive oxygen species (Vignini 2011). The brain is full of polyunsaturated lipids that are easily attacked by ROS, one of the primary mechanisms of oxidative damage already discussed. The brain is also relatively deficient in glutathione peroxidases and catalase, which protect from oxidative stress. Furthermore, the brain is one of the body's most oxygen hungry organs—although the brain is only about 2% of total body weight, it is responsible for approximately 20% of the body's oxygen consumption. One of the reasons that the brain is so massively metabolically active is the constant need to maintain the trans-plasma-membrane ion gradients required for the transduction of action potentials. When the brain is deprived of oxygen, as in stroke, these ion gradients dissipate by travel through passive ion channels and the neuronal membrane depolarizes. This depolarization mimics an action potential, and triggers the neuron to constantly release neurotransmitters into the synaptic cleft, causing further damage. Membrane depolarization also opens voltage-gated Ca²⁺ channels, which causes an influx of Ca²⁺, activating many maladaptive cellular signaling pathways.

HIF-1 has been shown to be neuroprotective in some models of stroke (Shi 2009). Inhibition of PHD, which increases HIF-1a expression, has been shown to provide neuroprotection in vivo. Preconditioning with hypoxia before inducing stroke has long been known to provide neuroprotection, and HIF-1 has been implicated in mediating this neuroprotective effect. Neuron-specific knockdown of HIF-1a increased tissue damage and decreased survival rate in one in vivo model of stroke. However, other results complicate the story of HIF-1 as a neuroprotective protein in stroke. Another study of neuron-specific knockdown of HIF-1a that used a model of stroke that involves a longer ischemic period found that HIF-1 actually increased tissue damage and neuronal death. This suggests that HIF-1 may not be neuroprotective in all cases, and that further study must be done to determine how and when HIF-1 is most beneficial to brain tissue in stroke.

The mechanism by which HIF-1 mediates its neuroprotective effect is also an active area of inquiry (Shi 2009). HIF has been shown to regulate several pathways that are known to provide neuroprotective effects on their own, including inducing expression of VEGF and inhibition of apoptotic pathways. HIF-1 also increases expression of glucose transporters. Increased intracellular glucose provides more fuel for pathways that produce reducing equivalents in the cell such as glycolysis and the pentose phosphate pathway, which help to protect the cell from oxidative stress. However, it is unclear which of these pathways are induced in different models of stroke, and further study is needed before this mechanism is fully understood.

Biochemistry of Factor Inhibiting HIF

FIH-1 is one of the most important regulators of HIF-1a activity. FIH-1 is an Fe(II)/α-ketoglutarate (αKG) dependent dioxygenase that catalyzes the hydroxylation of HIF at Asn 803 in the c-terminal transactivation domain (CTAD). This hydroxylation event prevents its association with p300 and blocks its transcriptional activity. FIH was first determined to associate with HIF via yeast two-hybrid assays (McNeill 2002). Shortly afterwards, in vitro hydroxylation assays determined that FIH hydroxylates Asn 803 at the β position (McNeill 2002). Sequence homology analysis predicted (Lando 2002), and crystallography results confirmed (Elkins 2003) that FIH was indeed in this family of enzymes. Analysis of this crystal structure followed by site directed mutagenesis experiments determined that FIH is active only in a homodimeric form (Lancaster 2004).

Fe(II)/αKG dependent dioxygenases are a family of enzymes that catalyze a wide variety of reactions with biological significance, including hydroxylations, dealkylations of DNA, desaturation reactions, ring formation and expansion reactions, and epoxidations (Hausinger 2004). Although it is unclear how closely related this family of enzymes is evolutionarily, they all share

a common structural feature of a central β barrel domain and a "facial triad" of 2 histidines and a carboxylate (aspartate or glutamate) that chelate the iron in the active site. The metal-binding residues are always arranged with one histidine separated by one residue from the carboxylate residue, and the second histidine somewhere else in the sequence, called the distal histidine.

The consensus mechanism for this family of enzymes has evolved from the mechanism first proposed in 1982 by Hanauske-Abd & Günzler (Biochemistry 2004). Shown in scheme 1 (I haven't made figures yet) is this consensus mechanism adopted by FIH. First, aKG binds to the active site, chelating the iron. Then, displacing two water ligands. Second, FIH binds to FIH, and the third iron, and displacing two water ligands. Oxygen then binds the iron and undergoes a single electron transfer to form a Fe(III)-superoxo species. This superoxo species then attacks the beta carbon of aKG, forming a bicyclic intermediate that decomposes to release CO₂ and an Fe(IV)=O species. This oxo species then abstracts a hydrogen from the β carbon of Asn803, forming a hydroxylated species that reacts again with Asn803, creating the hydroxylated product, and leaving the iron in the active site reduced again to Fe(II).

Although some intermediates in this consensus mechanism are difficult to characterize, many of them are very short lived, and are difficult to characterize. For FIH, one of the first intermediates characterized was the substrate-bound form of the enzyme, characterized by anaerobic crystallization and subsequent x-ray diffraction analysis (Elkins 2003). Oxygen isotope analysis confirmed that, in FIH, one atom from dioxygen is incorporated into succinate and the other into HIF, which is consistent with the proposed bridged intermediate (Wellford 2005). The Fe(IV)=O intermediate is too short lived in FIH to characterize directly, but it has been characterized for the closely related enzyme taurine aKG dioxygenase (TadD) (Price 2003). This same study showed by stopped-flow pre-steady-state kinetics analysis, freeze-quench Mössbauer spectroscopy, and primary isotope effects that decay of this Fe(IV)=O intermediate is directly coupled to hydroxylation, strongly suggesting that this species is responsible for the hydroxylation of primary substrate. A similar study with prolyl-4-hydroxylase (important in collagen biosynthesis) characterized the same Fe(IV)=O intermediate, as well as an enzyme/product complex (Hoffart 2006).

The binding interaction between FIH and HIF has important effects on catalysis. The paper that published the crystal structure of the HIF/FIH discusses the details of this interaction that are revealed in the crystal structure (Elkins 2003). While the interaction between FIH and HIF is largely mediated by binding with the stretch of residues on HIF that include the hydroxylated residue (from 795-806), a second binding site lying to the c-terminal direction from this site was revealed (813-822). Experiments testing the activity of FIH with various truncated peptides derived from HIF revealed that only peptides that contained both of these sites were hydroxylated at a rate commensurate to that obtained using experiments with the entire CTAD of HIF. A similar experiment by a different lab further corroborated these findings (Koivunen 2004).

Steady state kinetic analyses and spectroscopy have been used in several previous publications to determine that aKG binds before prime substrate in the FIH/aKG dependent dioxygenases (Zhou 1998, Pavel 1998). Recently, experiments in the Knapp lab have verified that the substrate binding order put forward in the consensus mechanism is the same for FIH. To determine substrate binding order, FIH activity was measured over various concentrations of HIF substrate and aKG. It was observed that the Km for aKG remained constant between different HIF substrate concentrations, indicating that aKG must bind before HIF.

Investigation of the residues involved in the binding of aKG to FIH reveals more details of catalysis. Most Fe(II)/aKG dependent dioxygenases have a salt bridge between the C-5 carboxylate of aKG and a positively charged amino acid side chain to mediate the interaction between FIH and HIF. Many enzymes in this family use an arginine residue to mediate this interaction. However, FIH and PHD both use a lysine residue to fulfill this role (Elkins 2003). The aKG mimics that would specifically inhibit FIH and PHD. However, later findings uniqueness of this binding interaction suggested that it might be possible to find determinants that similar aKG mimics have very different IC₅₀ values for the two different proteins, and so it is likely that other residues are also very important for mediating this interaction. The crystal structure of FIH also reveals that two aspartate residues hydrogen bond with the C-1 carboxylate (N205, N294). Site no turnover of HIF that was not coupled to decarboxylation of aKG to form succinate (Saban 2011a). This suggests that these residues are somehow involved in

the formation of the Fe(IV)=O species, possibly by encouraging attack of aKG by the superoxo species by pulling electron density away from C-2 through hydrogen bonding. This view was supported by spectroscopic measurements, which show that the metal-to-ligand charge transfer band was higher energy in these mutants, indicating that the π^* molecular orbital on aKG was higher in energy in these mutants.

Spectroscopy and chemical kinetics data suggest that substrate binding controls oxygen binding. Several studies that have investigated the Fe(IV)=O intermediate have found that this oxo intermediate does not usually form in the absence of substrate (Hoffart 2006). Unpublished spectroscopic data from the Knapp lab show that this is likely the case for FIH as well. [Details of Cornelia substrate has also been shown to not produce any reactive oxygen species, which corroborates these findings (Saban 2011b). FIH has clearly shown to undergo some side reactions such as autohydroxylation and uncoupled reactions in the absence of prime substrate (Chen 2008). However, these reactions are in the which indicates that the active site binds O₂ very slowly without prime slow. Spectroscopic investigation of the Fe(II) ion in the active site of a different Fe(II) aKG dependent dioxygenase found that the Fe ion is 6 coordinate in its free form, once prime substrate binds (Zhou 1998). These results suggest that control of water release is the mechanism by which peptide binding regulates O₂ binding in this family of enzymes. However, data from FIH suggest that the iron without prime substrate bound is a mixture of 5 and 6 coordinate geometries, which placed some doubt on the role of H₂O in control of catalysis in FIH (Chen 2008).

Inspection of the crystal structure of the FIH/FIH complex and some experimental results point to the importance of Q239 of FIH in controlling catalysis. In the crystal structure of the FIH/FIH complex, Q239 has a clear role in binding with Asn 803 of HIF (Saban 2011a). This residue is aligned with N803 in the crystal structure such that the amide groups in both residues' side chains are lined up with hydrogen bond donors next to hydrogen bond acceptors. Such an interaction may well be very important for holding N803 in place. A previous project in the Knapp lab investigated the role of this residue by mutating it to an asparagine residue (Saban 2011a). This mutant had dramatically reduced values for k_{cat} and k_{cat}/K_m , indicating that this residue is certainly important in catalysis. Further investigation of this mutant revealed that, although the rate of the decoupling autohydroxylation reaction was unchanged in the absence of CTAD, addition of CTAD increased autohydroxylation of Q239N by 60%, as opposed to a decrease of autohydroxylation in wild type FIH. Coupling of succinate production to HIF hydroxylation was also measured, which revealed an approximately 3:1 ratio of succinate to HIF-OH. Taken together, these data suggest that the Q239N mutation does not alter the decarboxylation of aKG, but somehow prevents HIF from reacting with the Fe(IV)=O species that forms.

My project's goal is to further investigate this finding and possibly provide a model for how Q239 directs the hydroxylation of HIF. To this end, I expressed and purified 4 mutants of FIH (Q239H, Q239E, Q239A, and Q239L), and tested each mutant for catalytic activity, changes in catalytic activity due to solvent isotope, and coupling of succinate production to CTAD-OH production.

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Halo 3 Aphorisms 1-3

By Adam Shen

- \$1. Playing Halo 3 without sound is like seeing a tree with no leaves.
- \$2. Each game is its own, but other games are played through the one, as a day is lived within the stream of many others and the ocean of life.
- \$3. When one sees the screenname "Don't say Darfur," one must judge only the K/D ratio. Any other commentary would be improper.

Tuition Dreams

by Matthew Meneghini

So this is going to be a little chaotic, but you know how it is. Finals. I've been thinking a lot lately about this year's engagements between the administration - and many students who are not unduly strained by the costs of Hampshire College - and the various factions concerned about or opposed to unduly high tuition costs. These thoughts are a little haphazard, and a little incoherent, so make of it what you will.

We all know the story, because it happens once every few years. Someone raises an objection to the price of attending Hampshire College, begins a protest, says or does something stupid; and the administration steps in as the reasonable adults they are who need not fight, but clarify. They explain that we pay the overwhelming majority of our budget straight from tuition, that our paltry endowment and relative youth are responsible for our budgetary predicaments. They provide us with statistics about our financial aid and budget process which soothe our concerns.

All of these explanations serve very well to answer the question, "why is tuition so high now?". That question, I think, is the wrong one to be asking. The real question should be: what will the price of tuition be in 20 years? What kind of model do we want to have? Do we want to hide behind the shadow the The Liberal Arts College and The Federal Government's Able Assessment of our Expected Family Contribution forever? What if we could have a model with a more modest sticker price, less debt and dependence on other people's assessment of our financial means?

We all know the figures. Next year, the cost of attending Hampshire College in the dorms will be

\$55,2001. For context, the median household income of the United States in 2010 was \$49,4452. It is for this reason that the overwhelming majority of our students receive some kind of aid, and that our mean package numbers, the idea behind the model is obvious: we charge such a hefty nominal sum to extract every dime we can from those who pay in full, while dispensing aid to the vast majority of attendees. It grants us status as a premium-priced status good, and it gets us status of money from the 13% of students whose families without aid. There's just one problem: it's completely stupid, socially irresponsible, and out of keeping with the best traditions of this institution.

The central trait of this model is opacity: it's impossible to know what the true costs of the college are, and therefore to have honest, frank conversations about Hampshire finances: to prospective students, we can safely and honestly say don't be worried by the sticker price - we meet a lot of demonstrated need; to disgruntled radicals, we can say this is the way liberal arts colleges work, they're expensive; to friends and sympathizers we can say we just need a bigger endowment and more giving; and all along never have to address the ways in which we could have changed and failed to do so.

How the model hurts the students:

If you come from a poor background and there is (shock!) even a small discrepancy with what the government and college believe your family can or will pay and the truth, this model punishes you to uncertainty, desperate scrounging around for funds, and possibly opens the door to debt. If you come from a middle-class background, you may find a gulf between what you're expected to pay and what you can pay that cannot be bridged by any institution other than private loan providers. What your family has in financial assets, it may lack in eligibility for outside scholarships. This dance is unhealthy for students, and there should be other ways for our college to officially charge more to the more able.

How the model hurts the school:

No matter how many games we can play with

the sticker price, Hampshire College is shackled to that obscene number as one of the most expensive schools in the nation. It impacts which students apply and attend, it's a constant pressure on students while they're here, and it throws us in with a mainstream educational establishment which is coming under intense scrutiny in the aftermath of the Great Recession. In the eyes of the outside world, we're as expensive as a "real school", but without the legitimacy. Hampshire has a number of minimalistic attributes that, had they been emphasized in the past, might have allowed us to stand proud as a cheaper, more effective alternative to traditional education.

What we can do:

The fact that we are so unbelievably expensive belies the fact that Hampshire College is lean and mean as an institution. We have no expensive NCAA athletics program, we actively encourage independent work, we use individualized field studies instead of relying on satellite campuses or big formal arrangements, and we lean heavily on the 5 College Consortium. All of this enables us to provide an education at a comparable cost to our private neighbors, in spite of having an endowment that is quite literally a rounding error next to theirs.

As I see it, we have a real opportunity. America's economic malaise revived the dead education debate: many people are asking hard questions about what college is worth, and the answers are not very good for traditional education. The rise (and fall) of for-profit online colleges, the revival of public interest in the state of community college, and the birth of online communities like the Peer-to-Peer university (P2PU) where people from all walks of life hope to gain an education - if not accreditation - for free are proof of this. For the first time in a long time, we might find a receptive audience were we to proudly step up and announce that we are The Cure to the blight of traditional education in the United States. And I believe we are, in fact, that cure.

What if, for the next decade or so, we dedicated ourselves to lowering our sticker price? If

we students led more EPECs, initiated group field studies, and created clubs and organizations dedicated to prolonging institutional memory and helping each new class connect with the classes above them? If we, the students, innovate in education more actively, then there will not be need for as many new hires, as much new construction, or any of the other overhead that we currently struggle under. Providing that the faculty and administration of the school match our efforts, we really might see a decrease in costs.

Not requiring competition is a big deal.

Few activities have externality benefits as strong or universally recognized as education, yet America persists in relying on a model that assumes that competition is integral to academic rigor. This is especially ludicrous when one remembers that we live in the Digital Age, where the costs of information transfer are at their lowest in human history. The fact that true alternatives, such as Hampshire, are so expensive prevents our model from being widely adopted, in spite of the fact that public institutions of higher education may need our innovations the most. How different would the conversation be if community colleges or public universities mandated the kind of academic self-empowerment we mandate? How much suffering could be relieved if the rising middle class of a struggling superpower thought critically about their history, society, and economics? How much more likely would that generation be to give alternative political, cultural, and economic views a chance?

Becoming the Next Big Thing in higher education would, of course, have benefits for the college that lead the charge. Doubts about our credibility and legitimacy would be eased - or at least matched by partisans on our own side - and it'd probably lead to friendlier laws and public policies. For Hampshire College, a college that's never entirely been comfortable with our identity, we might finally have the sense of communal vision we've long lacked.

I hope you can make some sense out of this half-assembled analysis and the associated fantasy. I wrote it in several different pieces throughout the year, so it's a bit of a Frankenstein's Monster of an essay. Nonetheless, on the eve of a leadership transition, I felt

#!/usr/bin/env python
.... woops

From: Housing Operations Office <housing@hampshire.edu>
To: Undisclosed Recipients
Subject: Non-Traditionally Aged Students Mod

Hi All,

We are considering creating a mod for students who are not of traditional age (22+). We were hoping to get your thoughts and gauge your interest to help us determine what size mod would be the best fit. Please take a moment to respond to this inquiry by answering the following questions.

1. Would you be interested in living in this mod for the 2012-2013 Academic year?
2. Would you be interested in living in this mod in the future?
3. Do you have any thought, questions, or concerns about the creation of a mod for non-traditionally aged students?

Thanks,
-The HOO

From: Jordan Persson <jwp08@hampshire.edu>
To: Housing Operations Office <housing@hampshire.edu>
Subject: Re: Non-Traditionally Aged Students Mod

Hi,

I am graduating this spring, and as such will not need a mod next year.

As for my general thoughts on the concept - though I'm a few years older than the students I currently live with, I have not felt out of place at all. If such a mod had been available already, I would not have considered applying to it. I cannot speak for other 22+ students, but I do not feel that such a mod is necessary.

Cheers,
Jordan Persson

From: Housing Operations Office <housing@hampshire.edu>
To: Undisclosed Recipients
Subject: Non-Traditionally Aged Student Mod

We will be creating a Non-Traditionally Aged Student Mod!

We are going to establish the mod in a 8 person, non-loft, Prescott mod.

If you would like to live in this mod please email us by Monday, April 16th at noon, even if you responded to the previous email. We will get back to you via email by Tuesday at noon to confirm that you have been input into the mod. Once we confirm that you are in the mod, you will not be eligible to participate in the lottery.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

-The HOO

From: Jordan Persson <jwp08@hampshire.edu>
To: Housing Operations Office <housing@hampshire.edu>
Subject: Re: Non-Traditionally Aged Student Mod

What exactly are the qualifications to live in said mod? Does one just have to be outside the 18-22 age range? In the initial e-mail, it was suggested as being for students older than 22, but in that case the name seems misleading. In my first year, my hallmates and I lived with a 15-year-old and I assure you we all wished he was living in a mod. Would underage students also be eligible for such housing?

Thanks,
Jordan

From: Housing Operations Office <housing@hampshire.edu>
 To: Jordan Persson <jwp08@hampshire.edu>
 Subject: Re: Non-Traditionally Aged Student Mod

Hi Jordan,

The mod is going to be for students 22 and older. We believe that on college campuses the term non-traditionally aged students is widely understood as 22+. When we advertise the mod in the future we will make sure that the guidelines for admittance are clear. Students are not allowed to live on-campus until they are 16, so we are not sure how you ended up living with a 15 year old!

Let us know if you are interested in living in the mod.

-The HOO

From: Jordan Persson <jwp08@hampshire.edu>
 To: Housing Operations Office <housing@hampshire.edu>
 Subject: Re: Non-Traditionally Aged Student Mod

Hi,

I'm glad to hear that under-16 students are an anomaly. Nobody on our hall could understand how the young David Beyer ended up there, why he let a homeless man stay in his room for weeks on end, or what the plethora of traditionally-aged girls he slept with saw in him.

At any rate, I will have to turn down your offer of age-centric housing. While I imagine it would be great fun to be a member of such an elite club and post signs that say "no teens allowed" on our door as we bond over our collective lack of fake IDs, the fact that the mod is located in Prescott means we would have no lawn to tell people to get off of. Instead, I believe I will be moving into one of many Traditionally-Improvised Graduate Mods (also known as a studio apartment).

Thanks,
 Jordan

Saana Asif

Stop Arming Human Rights Abusers

Description:

Every minute, someone dies from armed violence. Thousands more each day are injured, raped, forced to flee their homes, or otherwise traumatized -- many at the hands of brutal dictators and human rights abusers, supplied with weapons from the U.S. and other countries. Treaties regulate the global trade of many products -- even bananas and dinosaur bones -- but not guns and bullets. We need a strong Arms Trade Treaty now that will stop tools of death from getting into the hands of people like Syria's Assad and Sudan's Bashir who continue to brutalize their people.

Urge the Obama Administration to support a "Bullet Proof" Arms Trade Treaty now.

Target Information:

President of the United States
 President Barack Obama
 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
 Washington, DC
 E-mail: president@whitehouse.gov

Sample Letter:

Dear President Obama,

I am writing in support of an effective Arms Trade Treaty that will stop irresponsible arms transfers. I believe that the U.S. Government should be leading the effort to stop the unregulated flow of weapons because the U.S. has historically been a leading force in the effort to promote and protect human rights and has also been one of the most steadfast responders to humanitarian crises resulting from conflicts that have been exacerbated by small arms.

I am deeply concerned about the thousands of people who must bear the cost of the irresponsible arms trade, the people who are killed, injured, raped, or forced to flee from their homes due to conflict and armed violence. Inadequate and loophole-ridden regulation of international transfers of conventional arms permits such weapons, equipment and munitions to be supplied to those who will use them to destroy lives and threaten livelihoods.

I was shocked to learn that there are treaties to regulate the international trade in bananas and dinosaur bones, but no global rules for the trade in products specifically designed to kill and injure. The Arms Trade Treaty will address this glaring gap in international law.

I support the strongest possible treaty to prevent international transfers of conventional arms where there is a substantial risk that the intended recipient is likely to use those arms to commit or facilitate grave harm, including:

- serious violations of international human rights law or international humanitarian law;

- acts of genocide or crimes against humanity;
- gross and systematic armed crime and violence; and
- actions that seriously undermine poverty eradication objectives.

I know that the U.S. shares many of these priorities, and that you share my concern that weak criteria simply requiring states to 'take into account' or 'consider' these impacts will fail to address the insecurity and human cost generated by irresponsible arms transfers. The treaty must therefore require states to undertake a rigorous risk assessment when considering transferring weapons to another state. Where the risk of human harm is too high, the transfer must be prohibited.

I urge the U.S. Government to ensure that the Arms Trade Treaty is as comprehensive as the United States' own transfer control mechanisms. To be effective, the Arms Trade Treaty must regulate the global trade of:

- all types of conventional military, security and police armaments, weapons and related material, including small arms and light weapons;
- conventional ammunition and explosives used for the aforementioned;
- weapons, ammunition and equipment deployed in the use of force by police and security forces;
- components, expertise and equipment essential for the production, maintenance and use of the aforementioned; and
- dual-use items that can have a military, security and police application.

Finally, to avoid loopholes, the Treaty must also regulate all types of international transfer (import, export, transit, gifts, loans and other transfers) and the transactions essential for a transfer in each case (including brokering activity).

Please do everything in your power to ensure that the United Nations adopts a strong and effective Arms Trade Treaty that will keep arms out of the hands of human rights abusers.

I E S

A Piece Without A Title

Noah Loomis

"Oh fine," complained Melinda, lingering on the 'i'. "Be that way." We both laughed. She wasn't really upset.

"We're almost there" I told her as I trudged up the rocky mountain trail. "See?" I looked up at the cabin nestled amongst the trees.

"No, I can't." Some people would say that she was overly sarcastic, sardonic to a fault, but I rather enjoyed it.

"Oh Melinda..." I sighed
We continued in silence up to the riverside cabin.

"Whoa..." she gasped. It was a breathtaking sight. The whole valley below us, a waterfall and rushing river to my right, and the cabin nestled in the pine trees.

"I concede," she said. "The AMC huts were a wonderful idea."

"Of course they were, it was mine"

"Uh huh, sure. Explains why you're a fugitive."

"I'm sorry..." It was still a really sensitive subject.

"I know. You've apologized enough."

"I'll be OK, don't worry."

"I know you'll be." I couldn't see her smile, but I certainly heard it.

"Hello!" An amiable looking man greeted me inside the hut, introducing himself as Dean. He looked the same as many of the other people who worked on the trails: about two or three days unshaven, dressed in the typical clothes, and really nice.

"Hey," I smiled. "What's up?"

"Just doing a stint up here for the spring, ya' know."

I smiled and nodded. "Yep. Anyone heading up here that you know of?"

"Naw man, not expecting anyone for a while."

"That's too bad, forty degrees is perfect hiking weather."

"That it is."

"You're such a dweeb," joked Melinda once we were in the other room.

"Well sorry I like hiking," I replied, elongating the 'o.'

"It's nice, being up here," she admitted after a while.

"You ain't seen nothing yet."

I waved to Dean as I headed out. The cabin was situated in one of the most beautiful places I had ever been. The waterfall might have been my favorite, and it's what I wanted to show Mel. Part of the river ran right by the cabin, but the waterfall was slightly set back into a hill.

"Ahhh!!" screamed Mel as I jumped onto a rock in the fast-moving and probably freezing water. "Jesus Christ!"

"Don't worry about it."

"You're going to get us killed!" But we made it across alright. This bank was all bedrock, bare of the trees that littered most of the landscape.

The waterfall stood probably a hundred feet tall, and crashed down into a rock-filled pool. It would probably be a great place to swim in the summer.

Soon, just a few months away. The sun had begun to set, creating dramatic shadows across the landscape, but still fully capturing the waterfall.

Melinda was practically glowing. "I hate you."

"And why would that be?"

"Because this is so beautiful and I love it -"

"You certainly have an odd definition of hate."

"- and I don't like to admit how much fun I've been having and how much I like all of this, and I've said how beautiful this is far too many times, and I hate to admit that it's all because of you."

"Well in that case I'm not telling you to watch the sun set over the hills."

"Stayed out to watch the sun set?" Dean asked as I came back.

"Yep," I replied.

"Yeah, sometimes I like to just sit out there, on my own, and watch the sun set too."

"Mhmm. See ya, Dean."

[Mel's Diner, Bedford, Tennessee]

"Those pancakes were delicious."

"See? I told you a diner named after me just had to be good."

"Yeah," I wiped my mouth with a napkin, "but I look awkward."

"Don't worry about it, there are much worse things to be."

"Mhmm. Check!" I called to the waitress as she passed.

"Just a second, hun." I paid for the plate of pancakes and glass of orange juice and left. I felt bad for not paying a tip, but it wasn't like I really had any money to waste.

[Portsworth Hotel, Portsworth, Georgia]

"Room for one, please." I handed over the cash to the odd looking man behind the counter.

"Right this way." He unlocked a second-floor

room and left the key in the lock. "There's an ATM on front if you need it."

I curled up in the surprisingly comfortable couch to watch a movie.

"Ohh! Want to watch American Pie?"

"Is it any good?"

"Hilarious."

"That didn't answer my question." I took that as a "yes, let's watch it."

American Pie is one of the only truly funny comedy movies in existence. We were both laughing heartily by the end. "So this one time at band camp," started Mel.

"Mel?"

"Yes?"

"I'm really sorry."

"It's OK. I mean that, truly. I've honestly had so much fun with you that I never would have before. And I understand now, and you've changed."

"We've both changed."

I raised the knife and plunged it in once. Blood sprayed as I pulled it out to lodge it in again. The screaming stopped as her body fell limp, but it continued. The scream echoed around the inside of my head, refusing to go away. Refusing to go away. Until it faded. Everyone was still standing there. I ran.

I blindly ran, ran to the woods. Away, directly away. I stumbled over stumps, across rocks, over the hill. Through the woods with the whipping branches. Deer trail. Down the hill. Screaming. I wasn't screaming; she was. "You bastard!! You god-forsaken scum!!" I tripped and fell. Or maybe I was pushed. "You despicable creature." Her voice was showing an edge to it, an edge of breaking. "I HATE YOU!!" I grimaced as I hit and flipped over a rock on my tumble down. "I hate you!!" She was starting to cry. "I hate you!" I came to a rest, bruised and cut, at the bottom of the hill. "I hate you!" But all the malice was gone from her voice, replaced with gasping sobs.

"I...I..." but I knew she wasn't listening.

"Shut up, bitch. I didn't ask for you to be here"

Records #8930.

4-2-1994]

-Noah Loomis

Before you begin reading this, know one thing. This is not a cop-out. You asked me to tell you honestly and truthfully what happened that night, and I will. You might think that this is a cop-out as my story is about to begin like so:

I do not remember anything. I woke up and looked around before being able to drag myself out of bed. You know what they say about moving your eyes before your body? Sorry, this isn't the time for jokes. As I said, I began to drag myself out of bed, but that's a rather difficult task when you're not in a bed in the first place. You're on the ground, in ... Well, I wasn't really sure where I was at that time. Somebody's house. I stood up and looked around, but didn't recognize anything.

The house soon proved to be empty. And not a nobody-was-home-they-all-went-to-church kind of empty, a there's-no-food-furniture-or-lightbulbs kind of empty. You know, the purposefully abandoned kind of empty. There's creepy, and then there's waking up in a completely abandoned house. I kept trying to keep the thought of well, at least it couldn't get any worse from my head, because I knew that as soon as it entered things would get worse.

The staircase was only about twenty feet from where I found myself, so I tentatively walked over and followed the flight down, arriving at the front door to the house. Figuring out where the hell I was seemed like a pretty gosh-darn good idea, so outside it was. It was bright, and the angle of the sun suggested that it was probably mid-morning. 10 or so. Well, that's where I remember it being. It was bright, and the snow certainly wasn't helping. There was one set of fresh footprints heading to the house, but everything else was clear and untouched. At least I didn't teleport here

"And I didn't ask to be killed by a psychopath!" I stumbled in my steps, and the few bums around briefly glanced at me.

"Well too bad for the both of us."

Wonder where I should go... the police station? No, that was stupid. South. South was good. How? Well let's see... I could walk, or hitchhike, or take the train. No, too soon. I might be recognized. Wait! I didn't ask what you wanted.

Oh god... what has happened? What did I do?

"Mel?"

"Yes?"

"I'm really sorry."

"It's OK. I mean that, truly. I've honestly had so much fun with you that I never would have before. And I understand now, and you've changed."

"We've both changed."

"I love you."

"I love you too."

This was perfect. This was happiness. At first a curse she was now a blessing. And I truly did love her. I was glad that she was here, it was nice to always have company in the loneliness of your own mind.

Bang! The wood door flew open, nearly breaking in half.

"You are under arrest for the murder of Melinda S. Johnson. You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to a lawyer. If ...

[Balboa County
Sherif's
Department.
Pre-Interview
Written Statement.

last night, I thought to myself, trying to keep things light. I was in no mood for jokes.

Down the driveway I trudged, forming a path alongside the inverse footprints. It was always a game of mine to try lining up where I stepped with other people's steps, but I couldn't seem to do it this time. I probably wasn't in the greatest state last night, walking here. I would say that I don't remember doing any drugs or drinking, but the fact that I remember

nothing renders that rather null. The driveway seemed eternal, winding its own way through the trees. The footprints kept on coming, so I kept on going. There came a point where I didn't understand why a driveway would even need to be so long, but the continued existence of the footprints proved that I wasn't insane. As you'll note now, the driveway truly is as long as it felt.

After a while, and I couldn't realistically tell how long it had been, I

saw a bridge up ahead. A small, stone bridge, the kind you'd see in a movie, and underneath it was a stream. Here, the footprints veered off the road. Curious, I followed them underneath the bridge.

So, that's more-or-less when and where I found the bodies.

Omen Kid's Friend Discovers the Secret of the Universe

Jonathan Gardner

A preface, dear readers. On that most sacred of days known as 4/20, many were under the influence of marijuana...but only one achieved spiritual enlightenment because of it. The cosmic forces aligned in such a way that one woman at their nexus was temporarily imparted with wisdom beyond the comprehension of any mere mortal. Knowing that before long, she would lose this newfound knowledge, she quickly scrawled it down on a napkin and subsequently explained it to her friends who were nearby.

The napkin that follows, dear readers, will change your lives forever. Written upon it is the answer to the question that has puzzled philosophers for millennia: how does the universe work? The woman, nay, the prophet who received this knowledge has elected to remain anonymous, but her revelation shall nonetheless be shared with the world.

And now, dear readers, without further ado...the secret of the universe.

FAREWELL

Hidegen fujink
s
Seelk

The way the universe works. Or,



I feel like a philosopher
= positive thought
= negative thought
Or
truth

It's like I'm in some alternate universe where I'm in some deep hole, but

Everyone Else IN THE universe is sad.

but
Everyone Else is in some deep hole, I have to be sad.

Tony Stark for President

By Breton K Handy

In the past several decades, America has suffered a dramatic decline of presidents worth giving a shit about. No one really liked George Bush Jr., with the exception of the hipsters who just couldn't decide if it was a better idea to like him ironically or tell everyone they disliked him before it was a thing. Obama won the Nobel Peace Prize, which was a huge inspiration to English majors everywhere because it proved once and for all that you could actually get a major award for not doing jack shit. Though in his defense, his team did eventually catch Osama Bin Laden. But ask yourself this: why wasn't Obama the one storming the Bin Laden mansion and singlehandedly slaughtering everyone inside? Gone are the days of presidential duels to the death, of keeping bears and lions in the

White House as pets, and of conquering foreign nations. Gone are the days when a well-educated man could say something along the lines of "I am proud to be an American" without being laughed out of the room. Personally I blame the hipsters.

Of course, what made presidents and world leaders of days long past so fantastic is the simple notion that they really didn't give a single fuck about everyone's emotional problems. It's been said that Andrew Jackson would carry a cane around for the sole purpose of laying the smack down on his critics, effectively making him one of the most badass presidents of all time, and also a man who holds a special place in my heart. Now imagine, instead of an intolerant curmudgeonly man with a cane, your president was an alcoholic playboy with quick wits, a sharp tongue, and a tank missile up his sleeve. The solution here is simple. It is imperative that next president of the United States of America is none other than Anthony Edward Stark, the creator of the

Iron Man weapon and the true champion of freewill and the human spirit.

When it comes down to it, Tony Stark is really just a more tolerant, fun loving version of Old Hickory himself. In the first Iron Man film, he starts off as your average everyday billionaire genius playboy philanthropist. He's on a tour of the Middle East for a display of new type of missile, which he designed himself. Shortly after the exposition, he is hit by a roadside bomb and kidnapped by terrorists. Through some act of the One-Above-All, he manages to stay sexy and keep all his limbs intact. He does, however,

have a heart full of shrapnel and would probably have died if he hadn't managed to build a Tokamak reactor from missile parts and used it to power his heart. In a cave. With a box of scraps. Shortly after that he makes the decision to use the electromagnetic reactor inside his body to power a flying mech suit and save the world from his former boss, who was apparently pissed about the way Stark was running the company and decided the best way to express his emotions was to build his own mech suit and pull a Columbine on Stark's factory. Eventually Stark pushed him into a nuclear reactor where I can only assume he died a horribly painful death. This is a good thing because it shows that not only does Tony Stark not negotiate with terrorists, he certainly doesn't care about your emotional bullshit. Clearly Stark was either a débrouillard or completely insane, and either way I think we can all agree he belongs in the White House.

As if that argument didn't prove my point enough. Stark is more than just a warlord badass. In Iron Man 2, he actually gets political. The government in the Iron Man universe is apparently composed of commies and hippies, which I can only imagine is a satire on the grim state of affairs we have in America today. The government asks that he turn over the suit to the state. Stark essentially tells the feds to piss off. See, what Stark understands is that the right to bear arms is a fundamental human right, and we live in a world that constantly threatens that right. What the government fails to take into account is that if a man is intelligent, determined, and completely insane enough to implant a nuclear reactor into his own heart and use the excess energy to power a weaponized robotic suit, then he should probably get to keep the robotic suit. You at least owe him that. However, because Stark

happens to own the most reputable war machine (no pun intended) in the country, he gets to keep the suit regardless of international law and save America from the Russians, which is irony at its finest.

Know the difference between Tony Stark and the kind of president who's going to shut off your Internet and let social bullshit get in the way of actual progress. It could save your life. Technically, it could save your life from an angry Norse god hell bent on world domination.



IAN'S YEAR:

FUCKING
METADATA

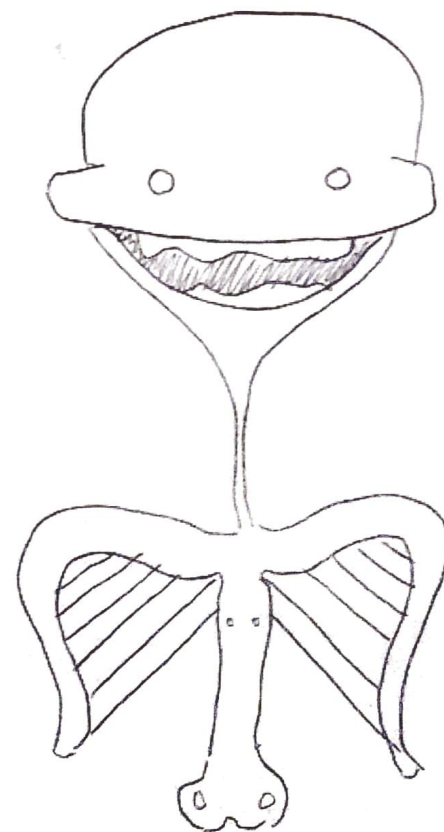
HOW

IT

DOES

WORK?!

[this submission drawn with sharpie in fist, like a damaged computer-programmer toddler]

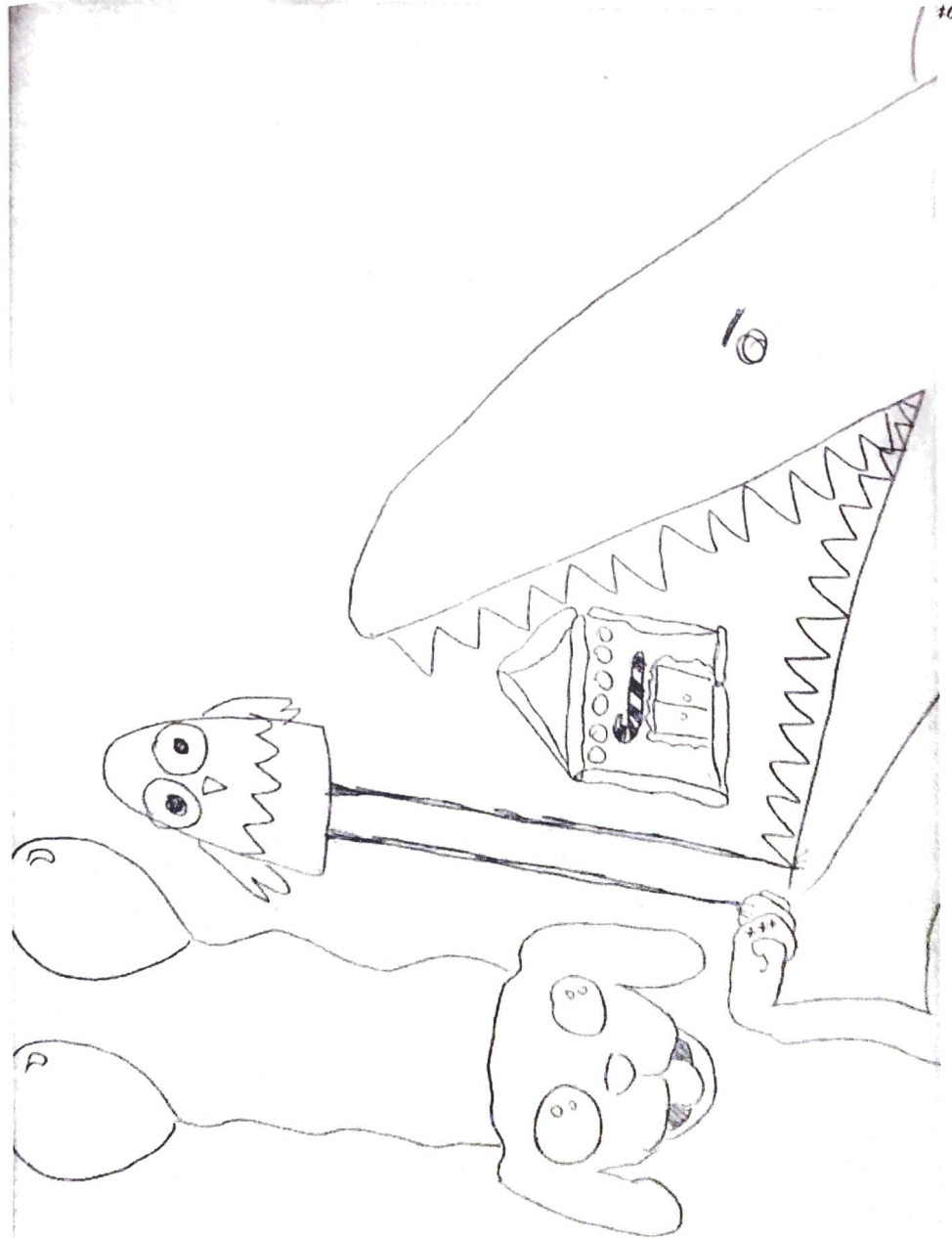


MURF AND THE MAGGOT

You know what Stuart I like you
other people here in the trailer park don't
good fine people Stuart
watch a little more + mindy on
the grocers are doing to the soil
delivers papers in the neighborhood
snakes crack but I don't
birthday all he wants is
a burrow owl I'll never eat
the guy breaks down a bus
in out in my yard and then
says 'you look for my
pogo stick everyone knows that
ground now Stuart do you
the queers are doing to the
years ago the summer my
know that crawl that comes that
called the mixer the man said
all times but bill jr he was
lost it one time he was digging
Sno-cone concession a few days later there is a pamphlet in the mail addressed
to bill jr and its entitled do you know what the queers are doing to the soil
now Stuart if you look at the soil around any city with a large underground
humane population like des-moines Iowa for example you can't build anything
on top of it. But the government says its due to poor farming but I know its the
grocers they're in it with the aliens building landing strips for gay masthans



You're not like the
got me wrong they're
to sit back with cool coars b7
47 but they don't know what
you know that Johnny Wenzung kid
some of the neighbors say he
believe it any way for his teeth
a burrow owl like 'dod got me
for anything else as long as I live' so
him a burrow owl so the other night
the wenzung kid up in the tree he
burrow owl well jumpin jesus on a
a burrow owl lives in a hole in the
think a kid like that knows what
soil? this all started about 10
oldest boy bill jr died you
this year it came with a red
your arms + legs inside the mixer at
a danderil he was leaning out sayin dod dod
they found his head over by the



A T E

Lottery 3.0 Proposal

Jonathan "Omen Kid"
Gardner

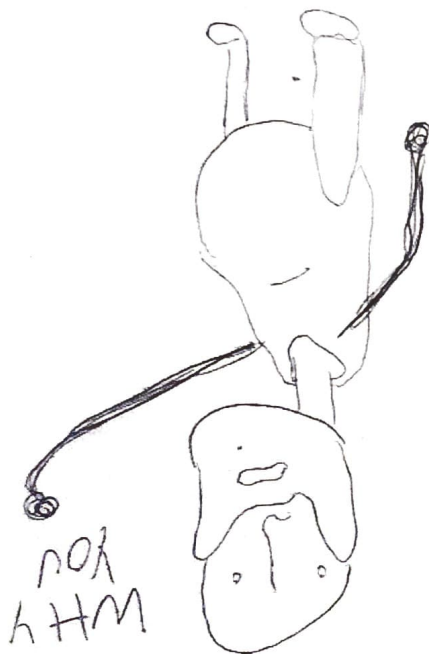
The housing lottery went through a number of revisions this past year, but let's face it: it's still a broken mess of a system. Okay, I might be a little biased, seeing that I am a lowly first-year and therefore it is damn near fucking impossible for me to get a mod (actually I'm not entirely sure this is true, seeing as there are still two days of the lottery left as I write this, and for all I know the stars could align in such a way that Shark Mod actually has enough points to win a mod). And I'm sure that next year and the year after that I will completely appreciate the logic of a system that rewards you for seniority. But right now? Fuck that.

For that reason, I would like to propose a number of further adjustments to the housing lottery, the first of which shall be NOT calling it the housing lottery anymore, because let's face it: it's not really a lottery to begin with. Instead, it should be called the "Housing FUCK YOU WE'RE GOING TO SCHEDULE THIS WHILE YOU'RE TRYING TO WORK ON FINALS LOLOLOLOL". Or the "Housing Auction". One of the two. Second, instead of having points, groups going

for a mod should instead be forced to fight for the death for the right to their mod. Sort of like The Hunger Games, which is fitting because I saw a meme about the housing lottery that was all like "May the odds be ever in your favor" and stuff.

Yeah.

Although now that I think about it, if we go with the



whole battle to the death thing, it's not so much an auction anymore, is it? Okay. New name: "Housing Scuffle". Much better. Now, what's really convenient about this new system will be the way it makes it progressively easier for groups to win a mod as the days go on, because the groups that didn't get a mod on any particular day will be dead and so can't move on to the next day to compete with you and steal people who you're trying to add to your own mod ARE YOU READING THIS ISAAC'S MOD? BECAUSE FUCK. YOU.

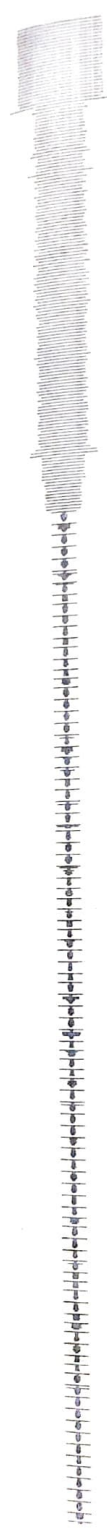
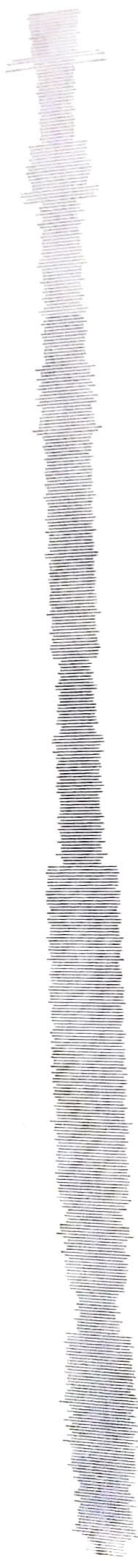
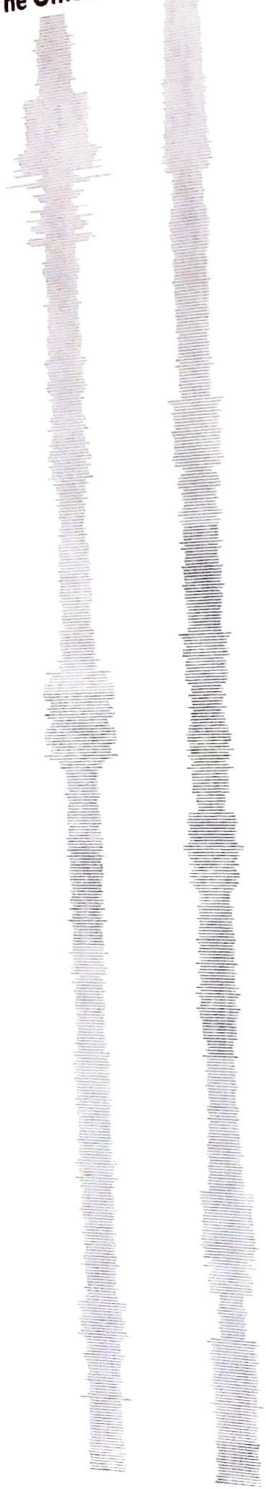
Anyway.

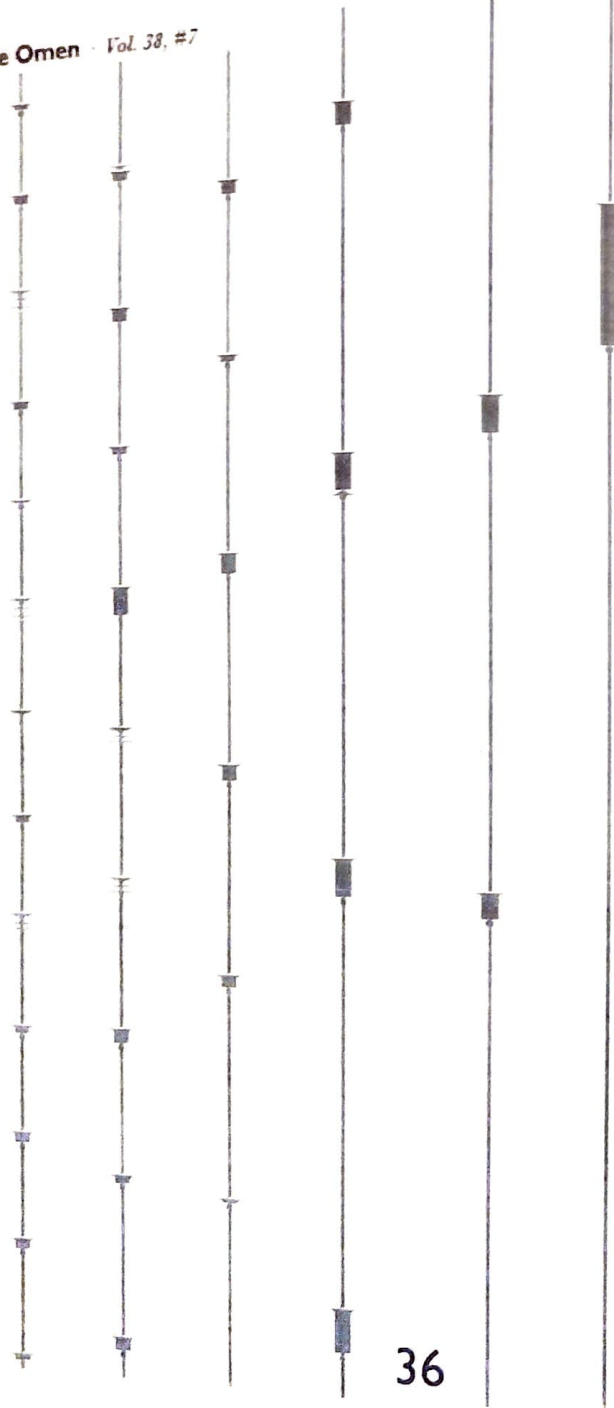
Or maybe it can be a relay race. New name again: "Housing Marathon". That's the last name change, I promise. So whichever group gets to their mod first gets it! Actually, on second thought, this gets rid of the whole competition dying thing, so I don't like it as much. Maybe there can be rivers of lava and stuff in the way. With sharks. Sharks with laser beams. Yeah, I like where this is going. Wait, never mind, I'm slow, I can't compete in a race.

Back to the battle to the death idea. Okay, I know I said no more name changes, but I just really like the sound of "Housing Rumpus". Sound good? I think it does. But really, on second thought, I probably would n't last long in a battle to the death, since I'm small and scrawny and an easy target. Hm. This is a problem.

Okay, I think I've figured it out. First, we need to tear the Merrill dorms down and house every first-year in Dakin from now on. Next, we build a new set of mods in their place, enough to house all the second-years who otherwise wouldn't be able to get a mod. Problem solved! Yay! Except I am told that Merrill is owned by Sodexo, so we also need to destroy Sodexo. Somehow. There's a way somewhere.

Fuck guys I just really do not want to live in the dorms again.





FUCK
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EWEN

Disclaimer and Staff Note

Hey friends, this is your smilin' Sunday Afternoon/Monday Morning layout monkey finishing up the Omen and bringing you a disclaimer and advisory about the following article.

The article "About Privilege" came to our email a little late on Friday to be in the issue if we had finished up on time, but we didn't, so after some discussion, we're including it in this issue instead of in the first issue in the fall. It presents some views on privilege which some community members will find alienating and extremely problematic. We recognize that it is unfortunate that we're printing this in the last issue of the year, meaning there's no way to get your responses printed this year. We absolutely encourage you to write in anyway. We'll publish them in the first issue of the Fall semester.

The Omen as a publication does not in any way endorse or affirm the content, form, or literary quality of any of its articles, including this one.

Individual Omen staffers are, as always, responsible for their own damn opinions.

"we publish all signed submissions from members of the Hampshire community that are not libelous. Send us your impassioned yet poorly-thought-out rants.... The Omen is about giving you a voice, no matter how little you deserve it."

Omen policy means we may not agree with what you say, but we will defend to FiCom your right to say it.

About Privilege

Nathan R. Anecone

Many people who profess to come from an underprivileged background on campus array themselves in debate against the system of preferential treatment which they seem to see acting everywhere, at all stages of being like some other or light. Everywhere, I see mention of white privilege, male privilege, this privilege, that privilege and, being both male and white, I wonder why I am not yet King of France. What I want to expose in this brief essay is the hidden, dubiously ignorant double standard belying the assumption of someone else's privilege, because I am occasionally offended by the stares I receive walking around campus, and feel it necessary to correct a grave misapprehension.

If you don't know anything about some him or her, it is as much a fallacy to presume that, because he is white, has blond hair, and had ancestors living here for x many generations instead of y, that he must enjoy some special and revered status. I want to explode this whole conception.

The error in the concept of "white privilege" lies in the fact that historically, many ostensibly white ethnicities in America were at some point actively discriminated against, and although it was not for the color of their skin, their whiteness offered them no protection. I am of primarily Irish and Italian descent, two ethnic derivations that at one point—and in certain respects still do, have a hard time getting by in the U.S. I was never racially abused for being Irish or Italian, but still, like Native Americans, I see images of Irishness corrupted by sports logos—the Celtic's Fighting Irish emblem, for example, which is a picture of a scrunched-faced, stout, curly-haired redhead in a fisticuffs posture; and find my Italianness depreciated by pop culture icons of thuggish mob bosses and belligerent Jersey shore guidos. If I am privileged for being white, I really don't know what the perks are. Maybe it is a property of privilege that it remains invisible for those who possess it.

I've lived all my adult years in Lowell Massachusetts, an old industrial town with a large population of people of color. Caribbean Hispanics make up about a quarter of the population, and

rarely does a day pass by where I don't interact with a Cambodian, as Lowell has the second largest Cambodian concentration in the U.S. after Long Beach California. I certainly dealt with racial tensions in my experience. It's hard being one of three whiteboys in your neighborhood. Sometimes I will be sitting on my porch and a Latino male will make some kind of taunting gesture, as though the modest house I sit in front of is some kind of grandiose palace and I am carrying a whip tied to my belt. Sometimes I feel like the misfit, the outcast, the freak. Perhaps this is some ancestral karmic justice—yet it was not my Irish or Italian immigrant forefathers who kept slaves or invaded the sovereign lands of native peoples. They farmed and made shoes and dropped out of middle school to help pay the rent.

Perhaps my lack of significant economic advantage negates any of the privilege of being white. My parents work every day of their life, and if they stopped working they would be out on the streets in less than a month. Many of the poorer white kids I grew up with often groped for an identity in minority subculture, dressing "black", listening to hip-hop, skipping class where false history was being taught. I've always felt a certain kinship for the downtrodden. It is a twisted turn of perception to see the absence of discrimination to be a sign of privilege itself. For the most part that's all I can claim to have enjoyed of my whiteness. The cops have been as much of a bunch of dicks to me and mine than they have with minorities, owing, perhaps to my slight (although not overwhelming, mind you) economic disadvantage.

About being male: I suppose there is something privileged about being born with all the physical advantages of the male anatomy and physiology, but lord it over anyone I do not. Sure, the extra muscle mass, testosterone for improved concentration and drive, and never having to fear brutal rape except in prison confers a nice state of mind. I've been fortunate to have the body that I do; it suits me perfectly, and I am the beneficiary of fairly good health in my young age. I can't deny this: that fate has been agreeable with me in the determination of my biological sex. But socially, I don't think I've won out too much for being male. In fact I've found the society around me to be at times savage and pitiless, living in the inner city. I'm awkward. I'm no good at sports, except soccer.

My mother and father, at least, would have wanted me like a princess if I were born female, and not a workhorse or prospect for their own future economic security. No doubt I do not suffer the indignation of being objectified as females do, but again, it is a twisted form of privilege for it to be defined as the absence of discrimination.

Regarding sexuality: being bisexual, I can't say I've won any lotteries in the heteronormative superstructure of the politicians and churches. So scratch that one out.

All that I am saying is that the advocates of privilege awareness on campus and at large unwittingly perpetuate the cycle of stereotyping they so fiercely denounce by staring down that white, broad-shouldered male they mistake for their oppressor. Hopefully this adds to the discussion. I am not one to detract from a noble cause. I support the struggles of minority ethnics and feminists, seeing the beauty and purpose of poetry in what they do, if their argument is rational and well-argued, and their grievances legitimate. Let us not engender more failures to communicate in our tears of passion and confusion. Let us be friends. I believe the fundamental unit of society to be the individual—the human agent. This comes first, prior to any class, gender, ethnic, or status identifiers. I merely want to suggest that this become our standard of reference by which we evaluate the behavior and character of others.

Peace,

NRA

Quotes from YoIsThisRacist.com

F. Stewart-Taylor

Anonymous asked: *Yo, I'm white, but I don't feel like I've ever been given any special treatment. Am I wrong dog? I had to work my ass off in school, take out loans for college, and fight to get a job after graduation. I've had to earn everything in life. So how has being white affected me?*

I love how people who don't face it always think that not having to achieve against systemic discrimination isn't "special treatment."

Anonymous asked: *THROWING HARD BOILED EGGS AT PEOPLE???*

Yo, that is pretty dangerous and a waste of food.

Anonymous asked: *Can we all just agree that every single type of racism is wrong? Honestly, I don't give a fuck who is black, white, asian, mexican or whatever. Why can't people just look past that? I'm technically white but I don't see myself any differently than any other person. Were all just people. Color shouldn't even be an issue.*

Yo, fucking asshole, you know the only people who get the luxury of having color not be an issue are those who are "technically White," right? Everyone else gets that shit imposed upon them.

Anonymous asked: *Would it be fair to say that when it comes to racists, it's one of the rare times that it's totally appropriate to hate the player as well as the game?*

Yo, it's actually always appropriate to hate assholes who try to pawn off culpability for their actions because "everyone's doing it."

Anonymous asked: *Yo, white former "it's not race it's class" dummy here. I'm sorry for how stupid I used to be.*

Yo, glad you dropped your stupid-ass ideas, good for you.

Anonymous asked: *YO I MISS THE NINTIES THERE WAS NO RACISM THERE DWAG*

Ok, I actually gotta give it up for saying "DWAG."

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hey cats and kittens, I'm running on way not enough sleep, and I am stuck here for like an hour, so let's talk about things I hate. I'm not talking about racism, or sexism, or homophobia, religious extremism, or the fact that Swamp Thing comes out once a month and Batwoman, Saga, and Smoke and Mirrors all disappointed me too much to buy in issues so I only have one excuse to buy comics a month. No, those are the low-hanging fruits of the hatred tree. Anyone can hate these things, and indeed should, to be considered a fit member of our enlightened society. In fact, not hating any of those things is probably going to be considered a social disorder within the next two generations. I'm glad we live in such enlightened times. But that's not what I'm here to talk about.

I'm here to talk about the fucking Omen scanner. For fucking real, you guys. I am so fucking over the Omen scanner. Briefly, I was enchanted by the presence of our own scanner, one which lets us scan your sweet-ass pen and paper or mixed media submissions, or theoretically your sweet ass if you came to layout, but this honeymoon period only can last so long. Like most relationships, the first cracks appear at Valentines day. There was just so much expectation built up, we spent so much time together, ultimately the strain was sure to show. Sure, I got irritable. I got downright rude. But none of that justifies the terrible behaviour the Omen scanner pulls on a regular basis. "An error has occurred during scanning." Oh. Oh has it. Goodness what a surprise. This truly shocks me. And so I unplug its USB, plug it back in, and seethe. And then it scans. And briefly, everything is lovely. It is like during the early hours of the Valentines issue. Our joy at your submissions brings the scanner and I back together, for as long as such a fleeting and material love may last. And then I go to lay out the issue. And everything is fine, the scanner and I have moved on our separate tracks and that's okay. It is near to hand, sitting to my left, ready for more if the mood strikes. And it is good. And then I export the fucking pdf. And the the colors have randomly inverted. Not on every picture, mind you. Just some. Seemingly at random.

Fine, maybe the scanner is just mad at me for using it and leaving it. And then Michael Zimm exports the Nemo, and the same thing happens. I emailed Zimm in the adult assisted psychiatric care facility he's staying in until his court date for his take on the scanner, and after his delirium tremmens settled down enough for him to type, he wrote the following.

"I, MICHAEL ZIMM, have known enough of love and betrayal after the divorce of I, Michael Zimm. When I, Michael Zimm, participated in the totally mutual divorce which left I, Michael Zimm, back in college again after many years of wedded adult bliss, that was supposed to be the last time that the heart of I, Michael Zimm, was thrown to the ground and trampled upon like a piece of butchers meat left out too long in the sun so that even the mangiest of dogs would not touch it! I, Michael Zimm, was turning my life around! The Nemo was a shot at redemption, a last chance to bring order and reason to the life of I, MICHAEL ZIMM! PRINT MEDIA WAS TO COME BACK AND BRING I, MICHAEL ZIMM, WITH IT! WHEN TAYLOR STEWART (layout monkey's note: no relation to Fiona Stewart-Taylor. I totally swear.) HANDED TO I, MICHAEL ZIMM, A GLORIOUS PICTURE DEPTICTION OF THE TRUE ANGST OF THE ZIETGEIST AT HAND, I, MICHAEL ZIMM, KNEW THAT IT WAS MEANT TO TRANSFORM THE UNDERSTANDING OF PRINT MEDIA AS A RELEVANT FORCE FOR SOCIAL UNDFERSTANDING AND I, MICHAEL ZIMM WAS TO BE AT ITS HELM. AND THEN DESPAIR. THE FOUL MINX SCANNER, TRAITOROUS LACKEY LOYAL TO THE OMEN, INVERTED THE COLORATION OF THE ARTS&CULTURE CARTOON PIECE, LEAVING I, MICHAEL ZIMM, WITH NOTHING BUT TEARS."

So there you have it, readers. Even Michael Zimm hates the scanner. Rainbows and unicorns,

Fiona Stewart-Taylor

